

**STANISLAUS COUNTY STATE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
CIVIL GRAND JURY CASE #07-35/07-44
2006-2007**

SUMMARY

The Stanislaus County Civil Grand Jury Criminal Justice Committee read the Stanislaus County Crime Report for 2005-2006 and did a review of media reports on law enforcement and criminal justice. As a result, the Committee interviewed law enforcement and criminal justice officials in the County to determine their view of what the state of law enforcement is.

Interview questions would seek the following information:

- Recruitment of police officers
- Retention of police officers and other law enforcement and criminal justice staff
- Detention facilities and their capacities and condition
- General crime issues

BACKGROUND

The Civil Grand Jury is mandated by Penal Code §919(b) to inspect all detention facilities in the County, which includes Juvenile Hall, the Men's Jail, the Honor Farm, and the Public Safety Facility. As result of visiting these facilities, the Criminal Justice Committee wanted to hear responses from law enforcement and criminal justice officials as to their views of these facilities; recruitment of officers, retention of police officers and criminal justice staff; and general crime issues.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

The Civil Grand Jury toured all of the detention facilities in the County and had questions of interest and concern that it asked the Criminal Justice Committee to address. The Criminal Justice Committee set appointments with each law enforcement and criminal justice entity and asked them all the same questions concerning recruitment, retention, detention facilities and general crime issues.

FINDINGS

1. Recruitment of police officers is a concern of all law enforcement agencies. It would appear that recruitment of qualified candidates is a concern locally, statewide, and nationally.
2. Retention because of retirement; officers leaving for better working conditions, i.e., pay, education; and officers finding other employment

opportunities is an issue of concern for departments where recruitment is already an issue.

3. The following was found about detention facilities:
 - The Honor Farm was spacious, well kept and full.
 - Juvenile Hall is well run and seems well organized. Bed space, however, is limited and there is real danger of overcrowding.
 - The Public Safety Facility is fairly new, spacious, well organized, clean.
 - The Men's Facility (Downtown Jail) is old; smelly; overcrowded; out of date (building codes from the 1950's govern this facility); lacking in space for both staff and inmates.
4. The consensus of law enforcement and criminal justice officials is that collaboration between agencies through various task forces has contributed to reducing crime such as car thefts, home invasion, drugs, and gang involvement. The collaboration has been extremely important in all crime within the County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that law enforcement pool their resources to recruit new law enforcement officers in Stanislaus County.
2. It is recommended that the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors make the condition of the Men's Jail a priority for replacement.
3. It is recommended that the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors extend the capacity of the Public Safety Center to include more bed space to accommodate additional inmates.

NO RESPONSE REQUIRED